

STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) ON SENATE FLOOR
CONCERNING BABSON'S REMARKS ON RESERVISTS, APRIL 25, 1955

The strength of a nation/is measured in terms of its gross national product/which consists of combined resources of production/and services rendered by its total manpower.

The ability to repel any attempt to destroy us/would be determined by the maximum output of our total manpower. This manpower must be shared by the civilian economy with the military forces/because each one requires more personnel of high qualifications than is available from supply. Consequently, any philosophy or policy/which rejects the principle of sharing the available manpower/between civilian and military needs/is fallacious. Such a philosophy or policy / is apt to lead to serious disagreements among our people.

Civilians should not be barred from participation in Military Reserve forces/simply because it is inconvenient to employers. Neither should the Reservist be penalized/in his efforts to attain greater economic security and advancement/ because of the fact that part of his time/must be given to drills and study.

The very existence of the employers of this nation depends upon the maintenance of military strength/necessary to protect against the seizure of our businesses and our entire country by an outside enemy.

Consequently, I am deeply concerned over the statement in Babson's Washington Forecast of April 18, 1955 which reads

as follows:

"Businessmen should expect some complications under the new reserve setup. For example, if a reservist doesn't meet his obligation, penalties imposed upon him could also hurt your business.

"Right now, you could avoid difficulties by not hiring reservists. Later, however, all young employees will have military obligations...and you'll have to learn how to live with the problem."

The Reserve Officers Association/as well as the United States Chamber of Commerce/has been attempting to educate the business firms of this country that it is not only a patriotic duty/but also a case of self preservation/to encourage employees to become members of the Reserve Forces.

We are living in an era of uncertainty. We pray constantly that we will not be engaged in another armed conflict. But, should it come, the Communist world will attempt to strike from the air/at the great industrial centers of this country. Their hope would be to deal such a blow/the United States would be unable to produce the materials of defense necessary for victory.

It is impossible to maintain sufficient forces on active duty/to provide maximum security for our nation. However, if we develop our reserves as envisioned in the National Reserve Plan/to augment the active duty force, we will have sufficient strength to combat the effect of sudden attack.

To achieve our objective, the young men of America must be assured/that their service in the Reserve Forces/will not hamper or retard advancement in the business world.

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The Reserve Officers Association has been attempting to educate the American public/that every young man has an obligation of citizenship to his country. Part of this obligation is to serve in the military/either with the active duty force or the reserve/or a combination of the two for a specified number of years. Under present law/each individual reaching age 18½ has an 8 year obligation in the reserves.

We believe business and industry of this nation/must encourage individuals to execute their military obligation/by serving in the Reserve Forces. Within a few years/these employees will have discharged their obligations/except that a certain number will be needed to remain voluntarily in the program.

Consequently, business and industry must take the initiative in encouraging employee participation in the nation's defense forces. Fathers and mothers must encourage their sons to carry out their obligation/rather than attempt to seek reasons for deferment.

The American public must be fully educated that every man, woman and child/has a personal and specific obligation of citizenship to the United States/and sufficient numbers of people must accept their responsibilities. When this is accomplished, our fears of Communist powers need not be as great. With God's help and guidance/our kind of government and our way of life/will continue as the hope of mankind.

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